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August 13, 2019

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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of The House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Republican Minority Leader
U.S House of Representatives
S-222, The Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act ("CBTPA"), first enacted by Congress in 2000, provides certain essential duty and quota free trade benefits for Caribbean Basin Countries. CBTPA was extended in 2010, is now scheduled to expire in September 2020. Representative Terri Sewell (D-AL-7) and Representative Brad Wenstrup (R-OH-2) have introduced a bill (H.R. 991) to renew this important program for another ten years, through September 2030. This bipartisan legislation, which provides duty-free access to Caribbean Basin apparel exports that use U.S. inputs, is critical to the region's continued economic growth and development. We are writing to express our support for H.R. 991 and to ask that the House move expeditiously to pass this legislation and renew CBTPA this year.

Haiti, a CBTPA beneficiary, is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; more than half of Haiti's population lives below the poverty line. The cataclysmic 2010 earthquake took the lives of more than 200,000 people. In 2016, Hurricane Matthew destroyed 90 percent of the buildings in the country's southern region. Despite these recent disasters, over the past decade, Haiti has made significant investments in infrastructure, particularly in industrial parks, roads, ports, and electricity, that have helped improve the economic potential of the country and the quality of life for Haitians.

These investments were made, in large part, to take advantage of preferences granted to Haitian apparel exports through CBTPA and other trade programs passed by the U.S. Congress, including the Hemispheric Opportunity for Partnership Encouragement Act ("HOPE I") enacted in 2006, HOPE II enacted in 2008, and the Haiti Economic Lift Program Act ("HELP") enacted in 2010.

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CBC.HOUSE.GOV

These programs constitute an integrated strategy which have contributed to the growth of the Haitian apparel industry over the past decade. In 2018 Haiti's apparel exports (which represented over 90 percent of Haiti's exports) totaled nearly \$1 billion, and over the past decade, Haiti's exports under the CBTPA alone have ranged between \$200 and \$400 million per year. Furthermore, in 2006 the Haitian garment industry employed just 9,000 workers; now it employs over 54,000 workers. CBTPA by itself supports over 15,000 of those jobs.

CBTPA has also spurred investment and created jobs in the cotton and textile industries here in the United States. In order to receive preferential market access under CBTPA, apparel assembled in Caribbean Basin must be made with U.S. inputs. For example, in 2017 two companies, MAS Holdings and Everest Textile Co. Ltd, each purchased a previously shuttered textile mill in North Carolina. These mills now produce textiles which are shipped to Haiti to be assembled into CBTPA-qualifying apparel.

Swift renewal of CBTPA is necessary to ensure this progress is not lost. Despite recent political instability in Haiti, CBTPA and the complementary HOPE/HELP programs have helped Haiti's garment industry to act as a stabilizing force amid the country's challenges. Renewing CBTPA would support further job creation in Haiti and enable Haiti's economic and political stability.

CBTPA's extension is necessary to attract new investors to both the Caribbean Basin apparel industry and the U.S. textile industry. Currently, potential investors are now waiting to be sure CBTPA will be renewed before they make additional commitments. The Caribbean Basin and the United States are losing out every day that CBTPA's renewal remains in question. It is essential the program be renewed as soon as possible so we ask that you support swift passage of H.R. 991 and maintain the U.S. Congress's bipartisan commitment to the economic development of the Western Hemisphere.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Rep. Karen Bass
Chair, Congressional Black Caucus

CC: The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader, House of Representatives
The Honorable Steve Scalise, Republican Whip, House of Representatives
The Honorable James Clyburn, Majority Whip, House of Representatives
The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman, House Ways & Means Committee
The Honorable Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, House Ways & Means Committee
The Honorable Earl Blumenauer, Chairman, House Ways & Means Trade Subcommittee
The Honorable Vern Buchanan, Ranking Member, House Ways & Means Trade Subcommittee

RENEWING CBTPA: ESSENTIAL FOR HAITI'S JOB GROWTH

SUMMARY

The Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act ("CBTPA"), first enacted by Congress in 2000, provides certain trade benefits for Haiti. CBTPA was extended in 2010, is now scheduled to expire in September 2020. It is critical for Congress to pass pending bi-partisan legislation (H.R. 991/S. 2473) to extend the program.

PENDING LEGISLATION:

- **H.R. 991 - Extension of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act**
- Introduced by Representatives **Terri Sewell (D-AL-7)** and **Brad Wenstrup (R-OH-2)**
 - Co-Sponsors: Alcee Hastings (D-FL-20); David Schweikert (R-AZ-6); John Lewis (D-GA-5); Karen Bass (D-CA-37); Steve Chabot (R-OH-1); Stacey Plaskett (D-VI-At Large); Yvette Clarke (D-NY-9); Frederica Wilson (D-FL-24); and Michael Turner (R-OH-10)
- **S. 2473 - Extension of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act**
- Introduced by Senators **Johnny Isakson (R-GA)** and **Ben Cardin (D-MD)**
 - Co-Sponsors: Marco Rubio (R-FL); Doug Jones (D-AL)

BACKGROUND

- The Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act ("CBERA") and the U.S.-Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act ("CBTPA"), collectively known as the Caribbean Basin Initiative ("CBI"), remain essential for the continued economic development of Haiti.
- Duty-free eligibility under CBTPA requires apparel to be made from U.S. inputs, which helps sustain U.S. yarn production and encourage further investment in the sector. Investments by MAS Holdings and Everest Textiles in North Carolina in 2016 and 2017 have created about 4,000 new American jobs producing inputs for CBTPA eligible apparel made in Haiti.
- CBTPA permits duty-free access for certain knit apparel (excluding socks and non-underwear T-shirts) wholly assembled in Haiti *from fabrics made in the region from U.S. yarns*. There is a quota for such imports. CBTPA also provides Haiti duty-free access for certain footwear, handbags, luggage, flat goods, work gloves, and leather wearing apparel, along with benefits for canned tuna, petroleum products and watches and watch parts.
- Total apparel exports of apparel are above \$1 billion, and account for over **90 percent** of Haiti's exports. Over the last ten years, Haiti's exports under CBTPA have ranged between \$200 and \$400 million annually.
- Congress has also granted Haiti additional market access preferences under the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity for Partnership Encouragement Act (HOPE I) enacted in 2006, HOPE II enacted in 2008, and the Haiti Economic Lift Program Act (HELP) enacted in 2010, and as extended in 2015 through September 30, 2025. These programs, which allow the use of third country fabrics under specified quotas, complement Haiti's CBTPA benefits requiring the use of U.S. inputs, and are not a substitute for them. The CBTPA and HOPE/HELP programs

RENEWING CBTPA: ESSENTIAL FOR HAITI'S JOB GROWTH

function in an integrated way to support Haiti's most important industrial sector, apparel, which employs over 51,000 workers, and accounts for 10 percent of GDP.

- **In 2018, the United States had a \$370 million trade surplus with Haiti, exporting \$1.3 billion and importing \$900 million; the U.S. surplus has ranged between \$200 and \$600 million annually since 2000.**

ADDITIONAL POINTS

- (1) potential investors in Haiti need to know the trade program will be renewed so they can be confident they will receive a return on their investment;
- (2) Haiti has brought on significant new factory infrastructure after the earthquake of 2010 and certainty in the trade rules for Haiti is more important than ever;
- (3) CBTPA is complementary to the HOPE/HELP trade programs enacted for Haiti between 2006 and 2010, which were extended in 2015 through 2025;
- (4) if CBTPA expires existing production will migrate to the HOPE/HELP program, using up the existing quotas under HOPE/HELP and disincentivizing further investment in Haiti;
- (5) CBTPA requires the use of U.S. cotton, yarn and fabric, so CBTPA is an incentive program for U.S. exports to Haiti;
- (6) the U.S. consistently runs trade surpluses with Haiti, and the more successful Haiti can be economically, the larger its market will be for U.S. exports;
- (7) extension of CBTPA would support further job creation in Haiti, contributing to Haiti's economic and political stability and disincentivizing Haitian migration to the United States or other countries in the region.

CONCLUSION: Haiti needs the U.S. Congress to pass legislation this year that extends the CBTPA program for at least an additional ten years. Otherwise, the uncertainty about CBTPA renewal will begin to accelerate as a major concern, and additional jobs and investment will be lost.

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2473

To extend certain provisions of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act until September 30, 2030, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. JONES) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To extend certain provisions of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act until September 30, 2030, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Extension of the Carib-
5 bean Basin Economic Recovery Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF THE CARIBBEAN BASIN ECONOMIC**
7 **RECOVERY ACT.**

8 Section 213(b) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Re-
9 covery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(b)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (2)(A)—

2 (A) in clause (iii)—

3 (i) in subclause (II)(cc), by striking

4 “September 30, 2020” and inserting “Sep-

5 tember 30, 2030”; and

6 (ii) in subclause (IV)(dd), by striking

7 “September 30, 2020” and inserting “Sep-

8 tember 30, 2030”; and

9 (B) in clause (iv)(II), by striking “18” and

10 inserting “28”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (5)(D)(i), by striking “Sep-

12 tember 30, 2020” and inserting “September 30,

13 2030”.

○



Georges B. Sassine pushes for closer Taiwan-Haiti ties

- 13 October, 2019
- Carlson Wong



ADIH represented by Georges B. Sassine signed a cooperative agreement with Taiwan in August, 2019 (Photo by ADIH)

Georges B. Sassine, the President of the Association of Industries of Haiti (ADIH) along with other important guests from Haiti arrived in Taiwan in early October with the hope to meet local businesspeople to lure more investment from Taiwan. ADIH is an organization that represents 106 members in the manufacturing industry in Haiti with the purpose to boost trade and improve local economy. Georges B. Sassine has been involved in the advocacy of HOPE act 1 and 2 as well as HELP. HOPE act 1 is Haitian hemispheric opportunity through partnership encouragement Act of 2006 passed by the US Congress to include special trade rules to give preferential access US imports of Haitian apparel and Act 2 of 2008 affords preferential treatment for imports of apparel, textiles, and certain goods from Haiti. HELP provides duty free treatment for additional textile and apparel from Haiti to the US.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E65ISI9RtYU&feature=youtu.be>

<https://en.rti.org.tw/radio/programMessageView/id/101843>

Sorini, Samet & Associates LLC is registered as an agent on behalf of the Government of Haiti through L'Association des Industries d'Haiti. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.